

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 093440

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPOL, NATO

SUBJECT: BUDGETARY FORECASTS FOR FY 1979

REF: USNATO 3449, DTG 051130Z APR 78

1. IN RESPONSE TO POINTS RAISED IN PARAGRAPH 4 REFTTEL,
YOU SHOULD PROVIDE FOLLOWING INFORMATION TO ASG MUMFORD:

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THE FY 79 (1978/79) US DEFENSE SPENDING PROJECTION
INCLUDED IN THE CY 1977 DPQ REPRESENTED A 4.2 PERCENT
INCREASE IN THEN-PROJECTED US OUTLAYS FOR FY 78.
CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL OF THE DOD-PROPOSED FY 79 BUDGET
IN ITS ENTIRETY WILL REFLECT AN INCREASE OF 3.1 PERCENT
IN REAL TERMS OVER FY 78 APPROPRIATIONS, SOMEWHAT LOWER

THAN ESTIMATED A YEAR AGO. WHILE THE FY 79 US INCREASE IS THUS SMALLER THAN PROJECTED A YEAR AGO, THE FOLLOWING IMPORTANT POINTS SHOULD BE NOTED:

A. US SPENDING IS CONSISTENT WITH THE ALLIANCE COMMITMENT TO ANNUAL INCREASES "IN THE REGION OF 3 PERCENT;" IT IS ACTUAL -- NOT PLANNED -- EXPENDITURES THAT PRODUCE MILITARY STRENGTH.

B. IT IS NOT UNUSUAL IN U.S. DEFENSE PLANNING TO PROJECT OUT-YEAR DEFENSE SPENDING ESTIMATES ABOVE THOSE WHICH ULTIMATELY BECOME FIRM BUDGETS.

C. A NUMBER OF PROGRAMS DIRECTLY RELATED TO NATO DEFENSE HAVE BEEN INCREASED ABOVE THE LEVELS INCLUDED IN THE EARLIER PROJECTED SPENDING TOTAL. THIS REFLECTS THE ADMINISTRATION'S EFFORT TO GIVE NATO HIGHER EMPHASIS WHILE DECREASING TOTAL DOD SPENDING FROM THE LEVELS PLANNED BY THE FORD ADMINISTRATION. CONSTRUCTING A PRECISE "AUDIT TRAIL" ON ALL OF THIS WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT.

D. THE ADMINISTRATION REMAINS COMMITTED TO THE 3 PERCENT SPENDING RISE, AND DOD IS DETERMINED TO ENSURE THAT IMPORTANT NATO EFFORTS, SUCH AS THE US SHARE OF THE LTDP, ARE INCLUDED IN FUTURE DOD BUDGETS. UNQUOTE.
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